

The Darkness and the Dragons

by Strucky

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Summary: Hiccup didn't let the Viking's take Toothless when he was in the arena, instead he jumped onto his back and flew to safety, it's been years since he left, but now it's time to return to Berk.

1. Prologue

Prologue

Twilight had fallen over the forest of Brluw when the young man entered his tent. The old man gazed up from his book at the intruder. The low light from the fire caught shadows of the other mans face, making him appear menacing and dark. Although, when he smiled all darkness disappeared.

"Hello." He spoke gently and stepped nearer to the old man. Closer, the old man could see a long scar curving its way along his right cheek. It began somewhere behind his ear and flowed over the corner of his mouth, only to disappear down his neck. The darkness that had been lost was replaced with intrigue.

"What do you want?" The old man bit out. He was not accustomed to people, let alone people in his tent.

"I was told that you could give me a tattoo." The young man tilted his head to the side. It was a childish gesture. The old man eyed him for another moment before rising. His bones snapped and he grunted.

"You have money?" He asked. The young man nodded and pulled a pouch from his side. He gave it to the old man who weighed it in his hand then nodded. "What do you want? A tribal design?" the old man rolled his eyes. That's all the young vikings wanted these days, he suspected that this boy was no different.

"No, no, nothing like that." He spoke and pulled out a book from his satchel. He flipped it open and handed it to the old man. The elder took the book and stared down at the picture. It was a dragon, one he had never seen before. It was dark, lean and strong, with wings like a bats. It struck the old man with a sense of evil. He flicked his eyes up to the young man. The boy smiled, causing the old man to grimace. Someone with such a scarred face as the he should not smile so gently. Someone like him should not have eyes with such life.

"Can you do it?" The young man asked, his green eyes catching the old man's. He held no impatience in his voice, no fear, no arrogance, just gentle curiosity.

"Of course." The old man snapped. "It's a simple design."

"Great." The green eyed man grinned.

"Remove your top and sit down." The old man grumbled and crossed the tent to retrieve his supplies. The old man stumbled in shock as he turned around to face the young man again. While the scar on his face was enough to deter unwanted attention, the massive scar that arched around his chest was enough to send some running. The scar was made up of large teeth marks that curved in a perfect crescent over his left side. It looked as though he could have lost his arm, and the deep scar tissue that remained told the old man that he almost had.

"What kind of dragon did that?" The old man had to know.

"I don't know." The young man shrugged.

"Same one that gave you the scar on your face?"

"No." The man gave no other answers and the old man didn't ask.

"Sit." The old man said, the other did as told. "Where do you want this?"

"Covering my back."

"Alright. Turn around, I'll draw it out."

The young man turned around on the chair as the old man took out wet paint.

"What kind of dragon is this?" He asked as he began to sketch out the design.

"It's a Night Fury." The green eyed man said. The old man paused.

"You mean it's what you believe a Night Fury looks like. No one has ever seen a Night Fury and lived to tell the tail."

"Have you ever heard of the village of Berk?" The young man asked, confusing the older.

"Everyone has."

"Ask anyone of Berk and they will all tell you that they have seen a Night Fury. It attacked a little boy who was killing his first dragon." The young man said almost wistfully.

"What happened to the boy?"

"He was taken by the Night Fury, never to be seen again."

"Did you live in Berk?" The old man asked as he finished his sketch. He admired his work. The wingspan fell delicately over the young man's back and reached up to his shoulders and stretched out slightly down his arms. The head of the dragon was turned to the side to show wide haunting eyes. It's body flowed down his back, as for the tail he kept straight, lining it up with the man's spine. The old man paused and glanced down at the drawing in the book.

"I grew up there." The young man answered with melancholy in his voice.

"What?" The old man tore himself from the drawing.

"I grew up in Berk, left a while back."

"This...This drawing, the dragon is missing a tail fin. Did you draw this?"

"Yes, that's right. Only one fin."

The old man frowned but wiped away one tail fin off the man's back.

"So this tattoo is to remember the boy from your village?" The old man asked.

"Something like that." Was all the answer he got.

The old man pulled up another chair and sat behind the green eyed man. He set his tools next to him then began to outline the tattoo. The young man didn't even flinch. When he arrived at the scar tissue the old man carefully worked through it.

"You're a ways away from Berk." The old man said, surprising himself, usually he had no care for conversation with his clients. "What brought you out to this side of the waters?"

"Don't know. Just felt like the place to go. I've been traveling for a very long time." The young man told him. "I've been in Beluw for three weeks, I'm leaving for The Stoney Shore tonight."

"Have work out there?"

"I carry my work with me. I make things."

"Oh?"

"Mostly armors, though I have become a handy builder in the past few years."

"Bet you wish you were using some of that armor when that dragon

nearly got your arm." The old man huffed a laugh.

"I've never really used it. Not the ones I sell anyways. I don't need them."

"This scar says otherwise."

The young man made a noncommittal noise then fell silent. The old man continued with the tattoo. The ink stained his hands and soon the green eyed man's back was covered in the black wings of the Night Fury. When he finished the old man stood, his bone popping as he stretched.

"Well, it's done."

The young man stood as well and stretched silently. He thanked the old man and looked over his shoulder. From there he could only see the tip of a wing. He smiled and nodded at the old man. He pulled his tunic on gingerly and rolled his shoulders once more. The old man couldn't stop himself from asking another question of the scar covered man.

"The boy who was killed by the Night Fury, you knew him. That's why you wanted the tattoo, right?"

The stranger lowered his head and laughed.

"The boy didn't die. The dragon never even hurt him" He said and moved out of the tent. The old man followed.

"I don't understand." The old man shook his head.

"The tattoo is not to remember the boy." The young man looked back at the old man. The night had settled and the stars and moon were out, shining brightly above. It lit the man's face in a glow that made him seem so much younger than the harsh fire light of the tent had. "It's to remember the dragon."

"Why would you want to remember a dragon?" The old man sneered

"Why wouldn't I want to remember the dragon."

The man then reached into his pocket and pulled out a whistle. He blew it and the low pitch surprised the old man. The green eyed man looked to the sky and the elder copied. Then the sound of wings startled him away from the heavens. Out of the woods, not the sky, came a dragon. Not just any dragon, a Night Fury. Its brilliant green eyes burned brightly in the dark. The old man was entranced by them. The young man walked up to the dragon and smoothed a hand over its glistening black head.

"I want to remember the dragon because he saved my life."

With that, the stranger jumped onto the dragons back. The old man held his breath. The pair took off and he watched them soar into the sky until the darkness and the dragon seemed to pool together and vanish from sight.

a/n: Hey guys, I feel like this chapter took a lot longer to write than it should have and that's because I couldn't decide if I wanted first or third person narrative. In the end I chose first, I hope you like it, but if I get enough feedback asking for third I will try my best to write that. This all being said the prologue is going to stay in third as will the epilogue, probably. Thanks for reading!

Escape and Return

I can almost feel the heat radiating off the dragon before me. Its eyes are narrow with rage and my own fingers tremble in the face of it. The Monstrous Nightmare is ready to leap, but so am I. As my hand closes in on the dragon I can see the change. Without the threat of a weapon the dragon can see who I really am. As it stretches towards me, I know that this is what I am meant to do.

"I said stop the fight!" My father yells from across the arena. He jumps to his feet, and before I can tell him not to, he strikes his hammer against the railing. The loud noise shakes the dragon out of my trance and the fear, and the rage, returns.

I run because there is no going back after this. There is no chance that my father would let me be near another dragon after this fiasco.

"Hiccup!" Astrid shouts at me from the other end of the arena. She hurls something at the dragon to get its attention. The Monstrous Nightmare turns on her, just as my father jumps into the pit.

"No! No, please!" I try to make myself heard, but no one seems to be listening anymore. They attack the dragon and I am helpless. The dragon must know this too, because it turns on me. A blast of fire chases me around the arena.

"This way!" My father yells. Astrid runs to him and I try to follow but the dragon is too fast. But she is safe. The Monstrous Nightmare has me under its claws, I understand more now than ever what true fear can do.

Then, like lightening, Toothless appears. He fights off the Nightmare, pushing it into a corner. He protects me. The Monstrous Nightmare trots away and Toothless turns to me, that almost smile on his scaly face. I can't enjoy the moment for long, the others are jumping into the pit and it's not safe for Toothless.

"Go on bud, get out of here!" I say and try to push him away. He whines and I realize he can't. Not without me. He can never run away again, and that's all my fault. I look to the other vikings, who all have rope and weapons in their hands, and I know I can't stay here any longer. I jump on Toothless's back. There is a gasp from the villagers and my fathers voice rises above the rest of them.

"Hiccup!"

I can't look at him. I press my heels down in the saddle and toothless jets up and out of the arena.

We fly away from Berk and into the forest. Toothless decides where to

go, I just help with the flying. He takes me to where we first met. I slide off him and fall to the ground. He nudges me and makes a concerned noise.

"Sorry bud," I murmur. "I just need to catch my breath. Thanks, by the way."

Toothless grumbles and lays next to me. It's strange how a dragon can understand me more than my own father could. I realize with a start that I can't go back. Not that my father wouldn't want me back, I just don't belong there anymore, maybe I never did. I lay down next to my dragon and curl in on myself. It's a terrible feeling to know you don't belong. Toothless wraps his tail around my back and yawns. I put my hand on his side. I can feel him breathing, and when I concentrate I can hear his heart. The sun settles behind the cliffs and I drift to sleep, maybe tomorrow will be better.

I dream of dragons. I can't see them but I know they are there, somewhere in the darkness. They never frighten me, only me them. When they are afraid they fly away and I let them go, listening to the sound of their wings.

In the morning we are not alone. Three Terrible Terrors have joined us, and behind a tree there is a Common Brown hiding. The little dragons are curled up under my feet, snuggling into the warmth. I scratch their heads and call towards the Common Brown.

"Good morning." The brown dragon is shy and steps away. "It's alright. Come here." I reach out my hand and the dragon pauses. It's dark brown eyes search me until it takes a hesitant step forward. When it's close enough I see that it's a girl, she walks around me and Toothless before settling herself on my right. She is close enough for me to reach out too, but I don't. I wait until the sun moves higher in the sky to wake Toothless. When he is up he stretches and shakes, sending the Terrible Terrors running and yelping. The Brown lopes away and hides behind another tree. I let her be, there is no need to scare her more.

We can't stay here long. My father will come looking for me soon and I don't want him anywhere near Toothless, or any dragon for that matter. I look over at the Brown, so small and timid, if my father finds her he will kill her.

"Toothless, wait here and look after her." I point to the Brown. "I'm gonna go get some supplies, then we're leaving." Toothless tilts his head. "It's not safe for you here bud. And maybe not for me either. I'll be back soon, but if anything happens you get out of here. You understand?"

Toothless growls in response.

"I know you don't like it, but...but it's the best I can do."

I walk away from the dragon and out of the forest. When I get into the village I can hear people milling about. Things seem normal except for my name being said by everyone. I stay off of the main roads. I keep my head down and avoid anyone who comes my way. I really don't want my father to find me.

I'm able to get to my house without anyone noticing, which a few

weeks ago no one would have anyways. It's funny how a few weeks can change someone so fast. Inside I pack up everything I can. My father doesn't come home, but I don't expect him to. Before I leave I see my helmet on the table. I want to take it. I want to have something of my mother, and also of my father, but I can't. I'm not a viking that kills dragons. I never will be. I take the helmet and hang it above the fire place, below where my mothers helmet was mounted. I hope my father sees it, and I hope he will one day understand.

* * *

><p>Eight years later

* * *

><p>The tavern was loud, vikings from all over were singing, dancing, and drinking with new and old friends. I watch them from where I am seated. It's seems like good fun, but when the waitress<p>

faltering when serving my beer I knew I would be out of place joining in the festivities. The scars did not exactly invite company. I glanced back over my notebook. The drawing of Ivy was nearly done, she just needed some finishing touches. I had found her near the Short Stone Cliffs, she was clever and beautiful. Most nights I would be with my dragons, but with the nearly healed tattoo I needed a better place to sit, rather than a tree or on the back of Toothless.

"Berk is doomed!" A man shouts from a few tables over. He then proceeded to stand on the table is stein raised. "Tonight I gather an army to take to that little rock! Who's with me!"

Cheers erupted from beneath him. It was not the first time I had heard my homes name spoken aloud, but I had never heard it like this. Why would someone want to take Berk?

"You won't stand a chance!" An old man yells from across the room. "Stoic's still got himself a loyal army, no men thrown together in one night will disband that loyalty."

"Stoic is a senile old man, just like you. He won't know what hit him."

I feel something cold settle in my stomach. I hadn't heard word of my father in years, _was_ he senile? I've never heard anyone speak so low of my father before. People from all over have sung their praises of Stoic for ages, what had happened to change it? Even though I left long ago, he's still my father. I need to know.

I close my notebook and join the table next to me. As I sit, the other cast weary glances in my direction. I'm used to it, I just smile at them in return.

"What's this I hear about Berk?" I ask.

"You don't know?" A young burly man says back.

"Been traveling for a while." I explain. "I haven't heard much of anything these days."

"Words gotten out that Stoic is ill, maybe even dying." The young woman to my left says. "People are saying Berk is prime for the taking."

"And Stoic never claimed no heir!" Another says excitedly. "Without an heir anyone can challenge him for Berk."

"No heir?" I whisper, mostly to myself.

"His only son was killed by a dragon ages ago, and he never claimed another. Why would he do a stupid thing like that."

"Don't know," I say, but maybe I do know. "Has...has anyone tried to take Berk yet?"

"One or two. The defenses are still to strong though." The woman tells me. "But, it probably won't be long before there's a new chief."

"You're right." I say and stand up. "Thank you."

I leave the tavern quickly and run into the forest it is nestled beside. I pull out my whistle and blow one sharp note. Toothless soon joins me at my side. He nudges my arm to demand a scratch behind his ear. I give in and scratch both.

"Hey buddy." I say softly and he wines. He knows something is wrong.

I thought of going home so many times. When I first left it was all I wanted to do. Then as the years past the urge decreased. I often thought of home, but never of returning. It seemed an impossible thing to do. But now a fear took over. A fear of never seeing my father again. I didn't want him to die thinking I was already dead. That was something I never wanted. I hadn't thought of what it meant when I left. I never thought of who would take over as chief when my father died. I knew it would never be me, even when all I wanted to do was impress him and kill a dragon. I'm not a chief, my father must had known that but... he claimed no other heir. Why?

My head is whirling and there is only one thing I want to do.

"Buddy, I think we are gonna go home."

Toothless rears back then stomps his feet in protest.

"I know, I know, but it's my dad." I tell him. "And I promise to keep you safe Toothless. I promise."

The dragon blows a strong gust of wind from his nose and trots away further into the forest. I go after him. We head towards the clearing where we slept last night where all the other dragons are. Once there Toothless makes noises and turns his head to the other dragons.

"I promise to keep them safe too." I say, understanding what he is trying to tell me. Over the years I have collected dragons, only the ones that want to come with me that is. The first was the Common Brown, that I have now named Mouse. The others came over time and from different places, and they are all my family. "We will keep

them safe. Right buddy?"

Toothless sighs and nods.

"It will be a quick trip." I tell him. "I just need to make sure everything is alright, then we can go back to finding more dragons, alright?"

Toothless grumbled then began to round up the other dragons. I pack up our things and tack up Mouse and Thief, a Raptortongue, with saddles and supplies. Toothless makes his way back to me and I hop on. My feet slip into the stirrup and with a soft click we are up in the air. Together we turn West and towards the sea.

3. The Way Home

The Way Home

The first thing I see is the forest. The endless trees welcome us back and hide us within their shade. I settle my dragons far from the village. Toothless is restless, as am I. He circles our makeshift camp over and over, looking out for anyone who would try and attack us.

"I'll be alright bud." I say, although I don't know how much I believe myself.

The forest here looks wilder than when I left. The earth seems to have taken over. From what I can see there have been no dragons here for years. There are none of the telltale signs of dragons, no rolled grass, no scratched up trees, no shed scales, no dragons. Sure, before I left there weren't many dragons in the forest so close to the village, but there were always ways to track one. It's not the best omen I could have hoped for.

Toothless and Mouse have settled in for the night. They sleep next to each other, their tails wrapped around the other. Taking Mouse with me has been one of the best choices I have ever made. She is Toothless' best friend, and on more than one occasion, my protector. The other dragons curl themselves next to the larger, and tuck in. I stay awake. Tomorrow I will go back into the home that I never fit into, and I don't know how I feel about that. Sometimes I wish I had someone to talk to. I love my dragons, but...Sometimes I wish I could actually talk to them.

The night grows colder and so do I. I shrug a blanket over my shoulders and sit beside Thief. He nudges my leg then places his head on my thigh. I pet his smooth head and he drifts to sleep. I stare up at the sky remembering the old stars I used to know so well. I fall asleep recounting the constellations.

* * *

><p>The morning comes to quickly. Toothless is already awake and walking the perimeter again. Thief has not moved. He dozes lightly next to me, letting me rest on his broad chest. I get up and thank him with a scratch behind one of his horns.</p>

I join Toothless with his surveillance check. We walk side by side

but he refuses to look at me. I know he is upset, and mostly uncomfortable, with being back in Berk, but it's something I have to do. If I had never heard that rumor I still believe we would come back here one day.

"I'm gonna go soon." I tell Toothless. He snorts. "Protect the pack. You know what to do."

He does know what to do. Toothless has been protecting us since the beginning. He also knows what to do if I never come back. Ever since we started gaining more and more dragons, Toothless and I made a pact; if I don't come back, he goes. It happened once. I was trying to save a Banglesnout from a trap. The dragon was terrified and strong. I got in close to cut it out of the trap when he grabbed me. I can still feel his teeth delve deep into my shoulder and I can remember yelling out to Toothless to go. And he did. I got the Banglesnout out and it took off, leaving me alone and nearly armless. Toothless didn't come back, I didn't expect him to. Later a nearby villager found me. When I was finally healed I went to find my dragons. Toothless had taken them far away, it took months for me to find them, but I did. Toothless felt bad for leaving me I could tell, but I was proud of him, he protected the pack. He protected the family.

These dragons are my family now and my father will always be my father, but I feel like I have lost him as family. Maybe I can change that now, maybe I can have my dragons and my father. I can wish all I want, I don't know if it will happen. Though nothing will happen until I actually go and see my father. First things first.

I pack nothing for my journey into Berk. I don't want anything to hold me down from getting back to the dragons when I have to. I check on every dragon before I go. I make sure they are all in flight ready condition, ready to run away if need be. When everyone looks good I nod to Toothless and turn away.

Walking to Berk comes back to me as easy as breathing. I remember ever step to take, all the shortcuts and all the landmarks. The memories make me smile. The village comes into view. It looks the same. That kinda disappoints me. Not that I thought Berk was going to change, I guess I just hoped it would.

I step out of the forest and I see my house. Or I guess it's just my fathers now. I want to go inside, I want to see what he had done, if anything. I walk around the back and open the door. It smells the same, making me feel like a child. I enter the house and everything feels so much smaller, the tables, the fireplace, everything. No one is home, I don't hear my father, there is no loud footsteps or grunts of the viking. I venture up the stairs and into my room. It's exactly the same. Nothing has changed except for the thick layer of dust covering everything. Had my father even come up here after I left? I go back down the stairs and then I remember my helmet. It is still there, hanging below my mothers. I remove it off the wall and dust it off. It's lighter than I remember and when I put it on it fits. I take it off, but I carry it with me as I leave the house.

On the roads there are people going about their days. When I walk by they stare, but they do not recognize me. No one says my name or runs towards me. They only look and whisper to each other. It's all very strange. When I was younger everyone knew me, even if they didn't

want to, but now, now people have no idea who I am. I recognize some people, mostly of my fathers armies, but they just look right through me.

I figure my father is probably in the great hall, so I head there. I open the doors and it is almost empty. One lone figure sits stooped over the table. I can see his flaming red hair from here. My breath catches. My father sits alone. I am frozen. I want to take a step towards him, but I can't. The build up to this has made me immobile. I take a moment to collect myself. My father doesn't even notice me. When I can finally move again I make my ways towards him. When I'm close enough he raises his head.

"Ya' want to take my village too?" He says and looks just past me.

He doesn't know who I am. _He doesn't even know who I am. _

That hurts worse than the dragon nearly taking my arm.

"Well I can tell ya' now my boy, ya ain't getting' it." He narrows his eyes at me. "Thirteen men have tried an failed to take Berk from me, you'll just be numba' fourteen."

"I'm not here for Berk." I tell him.

"Then what are ya' here for?" He says, his voice loses some of the menace it had before.

I swallow hard before placing my helmet beside him. His eyes widen, then flash between me and the helmet.

"I'm here for my father."

4. A Song of Remembrance

A/N: I'm very sorry for the long wait for this chapter. Between school and work and trying to manage a social life my writing for myself has fallen behind. Again, sorry. I do want to continue this story and I do have it all planned out, it's just the writing bit that is taking it's toll. I'm afraid updates will take a bit longer than I would like, but to those of you who are willing to put up with me, it is greatly appreciated. Thank you all for your kind comments on this story, it truly means a lot to me.

* * *

><p>A Song of Remembrance

The look on my fathers face will stay with me for a long time to come. He hesitates, then gently lays a hand on the helmet. His eyes close and I think I see tears but I could be wrong. He stands and I believe he is going to embrace me, but when his eyes open they are raw with rage.

"How dare you." He growls. "How dare you come to my village and pretend to be my son." Stoic takes a step forward and I take one back. "Ya' think you can trick me? Fool my heart? Be no chance of that boy!"

"Dad, please!" I say, still backing up as he moves forward. "It's me, it's Hiccup. Your son."

"My son is dead. And no helmet is gonna be changing my mind."

"Then what will?" I beg. I have come so far to see him. I have been so worried about him and he doesn't even know me.

"Get out of my sight." He spits then turns his back on me.

Everything in my body is telling me to run, to get away, go back to my dragons, never return. But my mind... I want to reconnect with my father. I want to.

"I stopped fighting." I say to the floor. "In the pit with the dragon, I stop fighting it. You wanted to stop the fight; seven hells you tried! But, that dragon was so scared, and so was I, and maybe you were too."

"Stories." Stoic murmured. "All ya' got is stories."

"They're my stories. Yours too, really." I say. "Dad I know I've been gone for a while and I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. I had to go, and if you want me to go again I will but... but I wanted to make sure you were okay. I heard some rumors that you were dying, and I had to at least see you before then."

"I've mourned my son for eight years." He said darkly. "Last I saw of him a dragon was taking him away from me. You say you wanted to see me before I died. I wanted to see my son before he left." He turns away and starts towards the door. I run after him.

"I'm sorry. Odin, I'm sorry."

"As am I." We reach the door and he holds it open for me. "Get out of my village."

"Dad..." Whatever I wanted to say gets caught in my throat. I stare at my father before me, and I want nothing more than for him to at least look at me like he could love me. I'm so lost and out of options I do the only thing I can think of.

"When I was six, I think I was six, you told me a story about my mom."

Stoic freezes. He looks me over again.

"You told me she was strong, brave, everything a viking should be, but you also told me...you told me she could sing. You said it was always sweet and light. I wish I could have heard it. I wish I had that memory. You sang to me though. You sang a lot actually." I laugh at the memories that flood back. "You sang of Dragons Gaul and the fierce and brave Lexxtrot. Hear me now, and hear me loud. The dragons do fly, up ever so high." I sing.

"Hiccup?" Stoic whispers, then almost like he was struck by lightning he steps back. The door swings shuts as he lets it go.

"Yes. It's me." I step towards him.

"I don't want to believe it." His chest falls and he lets out a heartbreaking moan of despair and relief. "I don't; but the God's know I do."

"Dad."

Stoic is suddenly wrapped around me. His arms still cover my entire back as they did when I was a kid. His beard is just as thick and coarse as I remember, but I can't help but bury my face into the familiarity.

"My boy." He weeps. "My son."

I don't know how long we stand there, it feels like ages and seconds all at once. When my dad finally lets me go his eyes are shining with tears and I know mine are too.

"I'm sorry, I'm so, so, sorry." I tell him.

"Me too my boy, me too." He touches the side of my face where his fingers catch on the scar there. His eyes narrow. "What has happened to you Hiccup?"

"I've done a lot." I say.

"Where did you go? What happened to the dragon that took you? Where have you been? Why didn't you ever come home?" Stoic's questions come rushing out of his mouth quicker than I can catch them.

"Dad, it's a long story."

"I've got time." Stoic smiles and I smile back.

* * *

><p>We sit at one of the long tables and I try to begin to tell him what has happened to me. I stutter and stumble over words that should be easy to say.</p>

"I, well, the dragon, you see the dragon well he..." I have to stop myself from spewing words that make no sense. I take a deep breath and begin all over. "The dragon that came into the pit with me, is my friend."

"Friend!" Stoic laughs, hardy and loud. "Dragons aren't friends. I'm sure no friend gave you that." He points to the scar on my face. I have to bite my lip.

"Dad I know this may be weird but; the dragons aren't all bad. That's where I've been. I've been wondering the world looking for dragons, studying dragons. They're not what we think they are." I've practiced this speech in my head many times. I never thought it was going to be this hard to say. "What I've seen out there, the dragons I've met have changed my life."

Stoic is looking at me like I told him I was a dragon myself.

"'Hiccup, dragons have attacked this village for centuries and centuries, no good ever came of them."

"Dad please just believe me for a little while." I beg, and for a moment it feels like I have never left Berk. "I can show you." Stoic looks suspicious. "I can show you that not all dragons are bad, most are good. I'll show you."

I stand only to be dragged back down by my arm by my father.

"You will not be going out and looking for some dragons! Not when I just got you back!" His grip on my arm loosens. "I won't be losing you again Hiccup. I won't."

"You won't." I promise and place my hand over his. "Just come see my dragons and -"

"NO!" Stoic stands and his fist leaps off my arm to slam into the table. "No dragons. Dragons are what took ya' away from me, I ain't trying to have that happen again. No dragons Hiccup."

I can hear the fear and sorrow in his voice, it shakes with it.

"Dad trust me, please. I know what I'm doing."

"BUT I DON'T!" Stoic shouts. I freeze. I've never heard my father yell like this. I take a couple steps back to give him room. He is cowered over the table, his hands are splayed out in front him and they shake. "I don't know what I am doing." He confesses. "Hiccup you are my son and it is my job to protect you, and I don't know how I can when you are asking for danger to find you."

"Please, please, trust me." I say softly.

"I can't. I can't be letting you out into danger again. I can't let you near dragons Hiccup, do you understand? Losing you once was more than enough. This soul can't handle losing you again."

I do understand. I understand not wanting to lose someone, not wanting them to get hurt, not wanting to get yourself hurt. I do understand, it's just, I can't be something I'm not, not anymore.

"Come see my dragons." I tell him. "Come see who they truly are. Dad, come see my friends." Stoic lifts his head to look at me. There is a sadness in his eyes I never wanted to see there. "Come with me to see my dragons or I will leave and I will not come back. That is a promise."

The threat is real. While I love my father, he can, and has cared for himself, I need my dragons. It's selfish and I feel like the worst son in existents to say it but I do. I could not live in Berk and live a lie no more than a dragon could never fly.

I take a step away and my father jumps from the table.

"Just come see them. You do not need to believe that they are all good or all my friends, but I want you to meet them. I'll come back to Berk with you afterwards."

"And you'll stay." Stoic tells me.

"And I'll try." Is all I give him.

End
file.